



Budget cuts loom while UFV builds new Agriculture building at Canada Education Park

We delayed this issue of *Words & Vision*, waiting on budget information, but ultimately decided that it is better to put out the newsletter and communicate upcoming budget information through bulletins and our web site. More information will be available after the UFV senate meeting at the end of February, when at least some information will become public knowledge. Management budget forums will be held Monday, March 3, 11 a.m. to noon in Abby A225/229 and Tuesday, March 4 from 3 to 4 p.m. in CEP A2428. At that time, FSA members will be able to learn more information and ask questions of management directly.

Upcoming Events

UFV BUDGET FORUMS

March 3

11am - 12pm

Abbotsford campus, Room A225

March 4

3pm - 4pm

CEP campus, Room A2428

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Vicki Grieve

From the President

The Big Chill

Late February – look closely at some garden beds, and you can see the first shoots of spring bulbs poking out of the ground. Yet it is also snowing. So, more winter than spring? Sometimes around here it feels to me like the first season of *Game of Thrones*, and I think I hear a whispered warning: “Winter is coming.” In our case, though, it's not really winter, but a severe forecast that you don't need signs and portents to read: The Budget is Coming.

We caught wind of it last year with the warning that it's only going to get worse, and this year in the rumours that circulate about possible lay-offs. We felt something a bit icy during this fall's class-size increase exercises. Then in early January our ESL department was hit with devastating force. Federal funding for ESL programming that had been transferred to the province for many years was pulled, and that short-fall was immediately transferred to institutions like ours. Here it has led to advance lay-off notices being issued to a significant number of ESL faculty and staff. This happened in January, and it's been an understandably hard semester for our colleagues in that area. Late last week the province announced that it will be providing some one-time transitional funding to institutions to help cushion the blow. We will do all we can to ensure this funding will help avert lay-offs from occurring.

The decimation of this UFV department is especially hard to understand in light of our efforts to attract international students. Targets for enrollment in this area have increased dramatically lately, and will continue to do so. However, we are told the decrease in funding and programming for ESL will only affect domestic students—people who live here, immigrants and naturalized citizens in need of the language training necessary to access post-secondary training opportunities and become fully engaged members of their communities. Because of some wrangling between the feds and the provinces, and some increasingly heartless social policies enacted by both levels of government, there is a group of people who are going to be left out in the cold. It's also difficult to imagine international or domestic ESL students being adequately served by UFV with a 40 per cent reduction in sections from last year to this year. Knowing that our counter-parts across the province face the same situation is cold comfort.

However, this move is not out of keeping with the direction the provincial government has been taking with funding for the post-secondary sector in general. The following information comes from a Federation of Post-Secondary Educators (FPSE) budget backgrounder:

http://www.fpse.ca/files/news_files/2014%20Budget%20Backgrounder.pdf

Over the next three years the total operating grant transferred to post-secondary institutions will drop by almost \$50 million. Moreover, total enrolments across the system are also projected to decline from approximately 206,000 students currently to 201,000 by 2016.... Another difficult trend included in the Ministry's three year Service Plan is the steady and dramatic rise in the number of international students enrolled in BC's public post-secondary institutions. The Ministry estimates that currently about 100,000 international students are enrolled in BC colleges, universities and institutes. By 2016, that number is projected to increase to over 140,000 students. What is not clear in the Service Plan is how that increase will work its way into other projections that show total enrolments declining from 206,000 currently to 201,000 by 2016.

So you'll forgive me for not being optimistic about the budget we will face for 2014/15. We will know our fate soon—once the senate budget committee meets on Feb 28th, the information will become public, and budget forums are scheduled to follow early the next week.

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Also, (forgive me for milking the winter theme), I'm shivering from the effects of the preliminary release of an "administrative density" study being conducted by George Davison, FPSE's secretary-treasurer. Like many of us, I'm finding UFV to be a less kind and gentle place than it once was. Initially I thought this was a function of our rapid growth and metamorphosis into a university. However, there are other factors at play, and the one that George's data is suggesting has to do with the increased numbers of excluded employees in our institution. I know it is a bit boring to mourn the old days, but we have had a justifiably stellar reputation for our collegial culture. Perhaps the conditions that created this included a relatively lean administration, one that needed to truly collaborate with the rest of us to make decisions and get things done. When George's study is finished we'll be able to direct you to it, but for now, here are some startling figures: between March 31, 2002 and March 31, 2012 at UFV, the total number of excluded employees increased from 24.02 FTE to 55.78 (132%). In 2002, 4 administrators earned over \$100,000; in 2012, 28 did. Sometimes numbers, plain and simple, can tell a story.

Of course not all excluded employees are senior administrators, but there is a community of interest shared by those who are not bargaining unit members. It's not always obvious or even relevant, but we're playing on different teams. One team has been growing faster than the other. As we get larger together, our differences are more pronounced and the barrier between the two sides seems less permeable. I'm hoping that this perspective is a result of a seasonal affective disorder brought on by the winter. At heart, I want to believe we can all work together to give students a meaningful and useful educational experience, and that we don't forget that everyone we work with, faculty and staff, included or excluded, is trying their best to achieve this goal. I'm also hoping that the allocation of resources in this year's budget will ultimately protect the game and not just the interests of the teams that play it.





Lynn Kirkland Harvey

From the **Chief Negotiator**

This report picks up where my last report left off – talking about provincial trends. As I indicated in my last article, longer term contracts are gaining popularity, along with some new and unusual provisions. I will end by reporting on our progress in developing our own bargaining proposal.

Provincial Trends

BCGEU just settled for a five year contract, with a 5.5% increase overall. They also agreed to three other aspects that we may wish to consider.

1. Economic Stability Dividend

The BCGEU recent contract Letter of Agreement defines The Economic Stability Dividend as “[it] shares the economic growth between employees in the public sector and the Province contingent on growth in BC's real GDP” (p. 4).

This means that for every percentage gain in the Gross Domestic Product, employees will receive a general wage increase equal to half a percentage. How this would actually be calculated is described in their contract. I don't know about you, but it sounds like they're promising to name clouds after us.

2. Market Adjustments

According to the BC Government, this is a temporary solution for areas experiencing skills shortages. In such cases, enticements are added to the base salary to attract employees (gov.bc.ca). The most recent federal budget seems to attempt to address this, so let's stay tuned.

3. Job Protection Language

This is particularly important to us as we dust off and dig into our Article 16. Any layoffs due to our dire fiscal situation will be relying on this article, and we can already see that it needs some work.

(Article 16: <http://www.ufv-fsa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Article-16.pdf>)

UFV Bargaining Proposal Progress

We are closely monitoring which articles are causing the members the most grief. Topping the list for heads, faculty and sessionals is Article 18 – most specifically, 18.14. John, David, Randy, and I have been meeting to figure out how to deal with an article that puts members from different groups into direct competition for the assignment of a diminishing number of available sections.

Many other articles are surfacing that require either just simple editing to outright overhaul. We are keeping a list of these.

In the meantime, we are still working on developing a bargaining survey that will address issues of relevance for our members. I have been taking the best bits from other institutional surveys with the goal of designing one that will serve to glean the most useful information from all our members. I am also creating questions based on frequently expressed concerns raised in the last survey and from member complaints brought forward from discussions with executive members. Expect to see the survey in early March.

The faculty survey about workload was generated by the Letter of Agreement on Faculty Instruction Workload, and its findings and recommendations will be presented to us for consideration for bargaining. These questions won't be specifically revisited in the bargaining survey, but you will be encouraged to comment on workload if any of your issues weren't addressed in the survey.

It is my hope to have our bargaining proposals ready for your review and support in May.



David MacDonald

From the FPSE Non-Regular Employees Rep

Practice what we preach?

Perhaps we are all aware of how things get done here in academia. We generally believe that decisions regarding the directions of UFV are guided by policies that are themselves derived from (or at least informed by) certain basic principles. The principles in question are usually presumed to be universal and fundamental values such as fairness, respect, equality and social justice.

We should not feel foolish or naïve in these presumptions. As former students, current instructors, or mature employees, we have been sufficiently exposed to these values and principles which we now sometimes struggle to pass along to the next generation in our classrooms and workplaces. Even those disciplines which may not outwardly or obviously appear to ingrain themselves with these values make efforts to bring these principles into their objects of study. Business departments, sometimes believed to be guided merely by the logic of market forces and self-interest, offer classes in business ethics. The sciences, our creative geniuses who drive technological innovation and brilliant insight into the natural world, also consider ethics in their studies and discussions.

More obviously, perhaps, faculties of the arts and social sciences routinely engage their students in the exploration, consideration and discussion of the important ethical precepts which undergird our social, economic, legal, and political systems. Indeed, would anyone argue that a post-secondary education should be considered complete without some moderate exposure to the values and principles which guide individuals, institutions, and the wider society which contains them?

However, the question before us is: “Do we practice what we preach?”

Recently, Canadians everywhere have been asking some disturbing questions regarding institutional ethics:

“Why do governments continue to cut corporate taxes while significantly underfunding healthcare, social services, and education?”

“Why do our leaders continue to so strongly support the expansion of the Alberta Oil Sands projects and the creation of pipelines to carry the sludge to our pristine coastline?”

“Why are government bureaucracies increasing while services are decreasing?”

“Why are there so many poor children and families in a wealthy province such as BC?”

Why indeed. There seems to be ample evidence that many of our political and economic leaders are unmoved by questions based on principles – except perhaps those of increased efficiency and profits. We have every right as citizens and consumers to ask why market imperatives appear to so consistently trump ethical imperatives.

But surely this skewed relationship does not exist here in our beloved University of the Fraser Valley! We are 'the little university that could'. We are innovative, energetic, and more compassionate – at least that's what we tell ourselves.

Yet, the same principles that raise such ire in the publics' minds seem to have found a welcome home here as well. We are told in nearly every meeting and communiqué of late that our ever-decreasing budget demands that we cut services, employees, instructors, even whole programs! The administrators, always anxious to please their Ministry masters, set about hacking and slashing at every 'unnecessary expenditure' that falls to hand. Armies of

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bureaucrats sift through the fine print of policies and contracts seeking to squeeze every penny, eliminate every duplication, and consolidate every department in order to fulfill their mandarin's commands. Ah, such is the life of the government agent.

At the same time, the "directors of the workforce" also seem able to increase their own salaries (substantially!), create new positions (VP of Closet-Space? Director of Gossip? Dean of Spiritual Awareness?), and discover funding for renovations, projects, new hires, and buildings that no one seems to have asked for or wanted.

I realize, of course, that these comments will appear unfair, even offensive, to some. Such persons would likely counter that they are trying to face the impending disaster of funding cuts in the most reasonable ways. They may well take offense at being portrayed as heartless, soulless bureaucrats. Indeed, many of them have demonstrated to me and others that they genuinely care for us and sympathize with the stresses we are all now faced with. Others, on the other hand.....

My point is this: There is, from a practical perspective, all the difference in the world between the 'facts' or 'reality' of a case and its appearance. Justice, it is said, must not only be done, it must be *seen* to be done. I am now sitting at a position where I can view both the attempts to resolve budgetary challenges as well as the perception of those changes. In many cases, there is a yawning chasm of opinions between what is being done and how some of these changes are perceived. This chasm is widened and deepened by the often different perceptions between those making changes and those affected by them.

The chasm is never greater than in the recent experience of non-regular faculty and staff at UFV. There are at least 68 fewer non-regular faculty teaching here this year. Of those who remain, many have found their contracts (i.e. the number of courses they will teach) significantly reduced. Staff and faculty in a variety of programs have either been (or will be) laid-off or have found their workloads reduced. Most recently, the ESL Department has been nearly gutted by lay-offs and funding cuts. History provides ample evidence that when times are tough, the most vulnerable among us suffer disproportionately.

It was the extreme exploitation and poor treatment of workers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that drove the creation of labour movements and eventually unions. The principle purpose of these labour organizations was to protect workers, individually and collectively, from unfair and unreasonable treatment at the hands of the barons of industry. The impetus and motivation for protecting workers by labour organizations were based firmly on a set of *principles*. The very ones listed earlier. It is these principles, or the lack thereof, that creates and sustains the chasm.

On the one hand, we recognize a government and its bureaucracies affecting dramatic changes to our institutions based on economic imperatives and budgetary calculations. From this point of view, the individuals who dedicate themselves to service and excellence within our university are merely units to be assigned a place on a spreadsheet – or removed altogether. On the other hand, these units are plainly valuable, caring, dedicated human beings who have sacrificed much time, energy, and resources to the cause of contributing to the education of their fellow citizens.

Hence, a chasm is created; based on differing perceptions and understandings of what is just and fair. The true role of a labour organization is to mediate between these opposing points of view. How can this be done; given the apparently diametric positions? My opinion has always been that any labour organization worthy of the name must protect its members from harm through actions based firmly on principles – fairness, respect, equality and social justice. In doing so, it upholds and reaffirms the fundamental justification for its own existence.

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The governments of Canada and British Columbia do not grant post-secondary labour organizations the authority to create and dispense budgets. Rather, they hand these instruments down from the mountain top and impose them upon us as mystical decrees. We are strongly encouraged to acquiesce and obey these budgetary demands; usually in the form of the proverbial carrot and stick. The consequences of refusing to conform are usually couched in apocalyptic language.

But while we do not possess government-sanctioned authority to control our own budgets and their potential consequences, we *do* hold a moral authority to challenge them when necessary. Our authority stems from the very principles which created our organizations and communities; and which we teach in our classrooms. Would it not be the height of hypocrisy to fail to defend our most vulnerable against the market imperialists in Victoria and Ottawa by employing our values in this argument? It's not unreasonable to ask whether we stand for certain principles and are prepared to challenge those who control the purse-strings in the defence of those who, by no fault or omission of their own, have become mere units to be removed in service of some mythical balanced budget.

Argument in defence of budget cuts, lay-offs and closures based solely on economic realities can only take us so far. Few, if any, are challenging the idea that we are living in difficult economic times (least of all, part-time employees!). But to assert that the only manner in which to address these economic challenges is to slash and burn large swaths of our university community is spurious. The fact of the matter is that *all* budgetary decisions are *choices* between alternative possibilities. To cut or remove one thing in order to save or promote another is a *choice*. The crux of the matter at hand is what guides the choices we make. Is it some banal conception of economic imperatives that force us to certain inevitable conclusions or are our choices governed by principles which direct us towards embracing more meaningful and value-laden alternatives? Will we simply conform to the seemingly ubiquitous notion that, in a weak economic state, the only effective and realistic decision to be made is to downsize our personnel (as well as their livelihoods and quality of life)?

I propose that we embrace and employ those values we present to our students and the larger community. Such principles offer us guidance and direction towards more humane, intelligent, and honourable alternatives. Failing to consider such options leaves us precariously close to an hypocrisy we should desperately want to avoid. My highest hope here is to merely encourage some reflection and further discussion.

A special thank you...

We would like to thank our FSA Social Committee Chair Sheila McKay for organizing the 2013 FSA/UFV Holiday Dinner and Dance this past December at the Rancho Hall in Abbotsford. The event was a huge success, and Sheila again went above and beyond to ensure the evening was enjoyable for all.

As you can see from the photo...
it was a lot **FUN!**

Photo: Kathryn Garcia, Neil Webb,
Tracey Mason, and Michelle Johnson





Randy Kelley

From the Faculty Contract Administrator

Life continues to be interesting in my role as faculty contract administrator. I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to assist our members in accessing their well-earned rights provided under our Collective Agreement. And I'm delighted to have a little input into where there may be areas for improvement as we move forward.

I find that I'm frequently called upon to help with the interpretation of the Collective Agreement, and with the assistance of other members of our executive, we most often find that there is language to help clarify most of the issues which arise in our workplace. The administration of our contract in the last few months seems to have revolved around duties expected of faculty, course assignments, seniority, and the entitlement to various leaves. Additionally, I've supported a number of faculty members in meetings with their deans and other administrators. Each of these issues is important to both the individual member and to our collective.

I really want to encourage members to become familiar with our Collective Agreement. It is the bargained document which outlines our employment relationship with our employer. The conditions set forward in the various articles are there for the benefit of all and helps us provide an environment in which we all know what to expect. It is terribly difficult to right a wrong which is not identified until many months or years after the occurrence. The trouble seems to be that we don't seem to want to make waves and will accept small variations in the application of the language. This causes grief when we discover after the fact that compliance may be in question, and the determination of the outcome of larger issues are dependent on the small variations that were allowed in the past. Please watch for the little details of how the agreement is applied if you have issues, and don't hesitate to speak up in a timely manner. It's much easier to get it right at the time than it is to go back after the fact.

I'm happy to address any questions you may have.

Important College Pension Plan changes

The College Pension Plan, which applies only to faculty (staff belong to the Municipal Pension Plan), has undergone changes to address evolving issues such as life expectancy and retirement age. Please see the message from College Pension Plan that follows and remember that these changes only apply to future service (from January 2015 onwards).

Board
communiqué

The College Pension Plan is being simplified and modernized

The college Pension Plan (plan) was designed almost 50 years ago and the world in which it operates has changed. Canadians are living and working longer; men and women in BC have the longest life expectancy in the country. The plan's members earn an average of 20 years of service; their average retirement age is 62; and their average pension is in pay for over 20 years.

The plan partners—the BC Government and Service Employees' Union, the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC, the Post-Secondary Employers' Association and the provincial government—are committed to keeping the plan sustainable and modern. The plan partners have proposed plan design changes to address evolving issues such as life expectancy, retirement ages and employment patterns. The College Pension Board of Trustees (board) support sustainability and modernization, and have accepted these changes.



Important College Pension Plan changes continued...

What is happening?

The College Pension Plan is changing. This will not affect the benefits members earn up to January 1, 2016.

Effective January 1, 2016:

- Active members' lifetime pension will be calculated at 2 per cent per year for all service earned after December 31, 2015. For service earned prior to January 1, 2016, active members' lifetime pension is calculated at 1.7 per cent per year below the years' maximum pensionable earnings (YMPE), with a temporary 0.3 per cent bridge benefit, which is only payable until age 65 (or death of the member). There is no change to the benefit accrual on salary above the YMPE.
- In order to fund the increase to 2 per cent, the age at which early retirement reductions apply is changing. The early retirement reduction will shift from 3 per cent per annum below age 60 to 3 per cent per annum below age 65.

Effective April 1, 2014:

- The plan is putting in place a mechanism to strengthen the long term health of the account for cost-of-living adjustments*. For every annual pay increase of 1 per cent or larger, one twentieth (or 5 per cent) of that increase will be contributed to cost-of-living protection by employers, matched by the employee.

* Cost of living adjustments are not guaranteed; however, once granted, cost-of-living adjustments become part of the lifetime pension benefit.

How will these changes affect members?

Active members

If a member retires or terminates employment before January 1, 2016, this is only good news because the changes strengthen inflation protection.

Depending on the members' highest average salary, if they retire at age 62 their lifetime pension will stay approximately the same, if they retire after age 62 their lifetime pension may be slightly larger, and if they retire before age 62 their lifetime pension may be slightly smaller.

If a member retires soon after January 1, 2016, these changes will have little impact on their lifetime pension.

Retired members

If a member is already retired this is only good news because the changes strengthen inflation protection. There are no other impacts to their pension.

What do members need to do?

No action is required by members. More information will be available closer to the implementation date.

Why is it happening?

- It has been almost 50 years since the plan was designed. These changes simplify and modernize the plan.
- The plan is evolving to address changes such as life expectancy, retirement ages and employment patterns.
- Through the changes the plan is proactively maintaining its value and sustainability.
- The changes preserve the overall value of the basic pension benefit and strengthen inflation protection.
- The changes to the lifetime pension calculation do not change the money required fund the plan or the funded status of the plan.

When will I find out more?

More information will be available closer to the implementation date. The website will be kept up-to-date with current information. No action is required at this time.



David Shayler

From the **Staff Contract Administrator**

Perseverance

By the time this article is sent out in *Words & Vision* I feel Canada will have passed most countries in the medal standings in this year's Winter Olympics and prove to be one of the leading contenders in the world's winter games. I have an abundance of pride in being Canadian and think that our country displays a very diverse, strong and talented group of athletes. I can't help but look at this young nation with a small population and be astounded by the not only the amount of talent this country produces (sports, arts, innovations, etc.), but the depth of Canadian spirit that amplifies these endowments around the world.

There are examples of this everywhere. During the men's cross-country sprint in the mountains above Sochi, the head coach of the Canadian team ran onto the course to help a Russian skier who had fallen three times and broken a ski. The coach gave him a Canadian competitor's extra ski that enabled him to finish the race. Or years ago, when a member of the Canadian Olympic sailing team gave up his silver medal positioning in the final course to assist two members from Singapore out of the water, whose boat had capsized. He did go on to finish in 21st place. Or Larisa Yurkiw, who obliterated her knee on a downhill ski accident in 2009, missed the Whistler Olympics and fought through rehabilitation, and financial hardship, to land a place on this year's Canadian ski team once again. She didn't earn a spot on the podium but what a courageous return.

I know these individuals do not represent all Canadians, and other countries are showing copious amounts of this courage, determination and integrity during these games, but it is these heart-felt stories that I believe helps define the character of Canadians. So why am I pouring out patriotism in *Words & Vision*? Well, partly because most of the stuff I am asked to share here related to day-to-day business is painful and probably some of the reason why some members refrain from reading *W & V*.

The other, and more importantly, is that we are coming into a time for members to be Olympians...all of us!

We have already seen advance notice of lay-offs and unfortunately, I feel this may be just the beginning. I didn't like the government's Administrative Service Delivery Transformation Project when it reared its ugly head a couple years ago but now this "never gonna happen," is happening.

All I can do is tell you that however the final budget rolls out next month, the FSA's responsibility, first and foremost, is to support any members affected by these cuts. Last year there were 10 support positions eliminated. The FSA and the employer were able to collectively secure positions for all the members laid-off.

Unfortunately, this year we anticipate more of the same... and here is where I ask you to be Olympians! We're in the third and down 2-0. The odds are stacked against us, but the spirit, the team and the positive force, will not let us even contemplate the dark side.

Now is the time where we stand together, be strong, and protect one another... even the ones drowning on a different team.

Together, we will set the sail that will lead us through these rough seas. We have seen these tides before and will see them again. And we have to stand solid here... fighting like Olympians.



Lisa Morry

From the Editor and Communications Chair

There was so much information coming at me in the Canadian Labour Congress women's leadership course this January that it was impossible to keep up with it all.

We did a pop quiz about the herstory of women's equality, learned more about obstacles women face when considering leadership roles, learned about power, oppression and diversity, learned about effective communication, about leadership and looking deep within ourselves to examine our own strengths and weaknesses in terms of conflict resolution, decision-making, public speaking, leadership, and consensus building.

The course focus was on building new women leaders and I felt like one of the senior people in the room. It was fantastic to see all the young, upcoming women leaders who had already scored some impressive accomplishments in standing up for safety, for worker's rights, and for working conditions in their own workplaces.

It was somewhat amazing to learn that it takes women four years on average to decide to run for elected office. I'm only surprised it doesn't take longer! Women often don't put themselves forward. We often think we don't know enough or we aren't qualified, but we are qualified. We're qualified to represent other people who are coming from the same places we're coming from. There's nothing wrong with a different perspective. That's what guest speakers Vancouver City Councillor (and former school trustee) Andrea Reimer and Vancouver East MP (former Vancouver City councillor, and a founder of the Downtown Eastside Residents Association) Libby Davies brought to their offices.

Libby Davies told us she got involved in her community when she was 19, first running for elected office when she was 23. She didn't win the first time, but she learned from her experiences and went on to become a five-term Vancouver city councillor, a federal MP since 1997, and the deputy leader of the federal NDP. Libby Davies said the single most important thing she learned in politics is that relationships and trust she builds with people are vital. Sadly, she also learned that women's leadership skills are often twisted into negatives in the world of male-dominated politics. Consensus building can be translated into weakness or listening can be seen as a sign of not being able to make a decision. Even at that, Ms. Davies told us that naming and understanding the often negative culture in politics is half the battle. A critical mass is needed to make a difference and that's why it's important for more women to run for public office.

Andrea Reimer, a former panhandler and low-income earner, was first elected when she was 29. Ms. Reimer, who said her strengths are organization and building personal support, has a "kitchen cabinet" of community members who are her personal supporters, and a supportive family behind her. Reimer encouraged us all to run for elected office, starting her talk by asking who among us was definitely going to run and writing it down on a flip chart. There's a myth of the "expert or ruling class," Ms. Reimer said. In actuality, we all have the capacity to govern.

"Representative democracy is not about knowing enough, it's about representing people," she said. Reimer, who has experienced some of the barriers to elected office that could affect women, said: "if you're poor and female, the one thing you still have is your voice."

The barriers to women participating in political leadership are daunting. There's the aggressive, boys' club atmosphere and the different standard to which women are held in seemingly irrelevant areas such as subtle differences or inadequacies in grooming and dress (remember how Hillary Clinton was pilloried for wearing pant suits when running against Barack Obama?). There's violence against women, sexist attitudes and sexual harassment. Even Belinda Stronach, an intelligent, moneyed, beautiful politician, was not immune. Remember

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Belinda Stronach was referred to as a “dog” when she crossed the House floor to join the Liberals? Former Prime Minister Kim Campbell, the only woman to hold that office, was criticized for divorces, childlessness and dating during her time in Ottawa.

For many women, the greatest barrier to public life is family responsibilities. How does one justify the long hours and travel required while raising a young family? Teenagers need their parents just as much as younger children. Then, just when all that seems manageable, your parents start needing help. Even when women do balance family and politics, they are viciously criticized. Liberal Judy Tyabji was attacked by other politicians, including her own party, and by the media for taking attention away from the NDP government by having a baby.

Other barriers include money needed to run for political office, administrative fees, advertising costs, transportation, babysitting and presentable clothing. Many women lack supportive partners, family, friends and community partners. There's more that could keep a woman from running for elected office: socialization, role stereotyping, racism, ageism, heterosexism, self-esteem, or guilt.

Is it overwhelming? Maybe that's why I'm surprised it only takes four years for a woman to decide to run for elected office, which includes union office. I come out of this course knowing a little more about myself, some improved leadership, speaking and debating skills, conflict resolution and consensus building skills and other skills that will help me in my role in our union, in my job in the library and, hopefully, in the greater community. I also gained an increased sense of urgency to encourage more younger women to participate in our union. It's going to be important to all of us.



Connie Cyrull

From the

Staff Vice-President

For a week in January I attended the Canadian Labour of Congress's 40th Winter School at Harrison Hotsprings Resort. This school trains union members in various topics such as: facing management, collective bargaining, federal labour law, provincial labour law, or returning to work, just to name a few.

I took the labour community advocate training program, a course that trains participants to help fellow employees during stressful times, and to provide a safe, confidential environment where members can relate their issues and get options for help outside of the employee assistance programs currently available to us from management. The labour community advocate training program started longer than thirty years ago and some unions use it along with the equivalent of our contract administrators.

During my week in Harrison, I also learned that the United Way has a long-standing affiliation with the CLC and the labour movement. The United Way depends on contributions from this sector to support our community.

With the new year, we will have many challenges to face as the government begins to claw back funding from post-secondary Institutions across the province. We are not new to “do more with less” instructions from administration. We also know that in the next round of bargaining there will be attempts to use concessions already won as negotiating tools. This led me to take to the internet to see what I could find on this subject. What I found was a CLC article on Canadian labour history. As I read, I found it interesting that governments in the past had taken away or severely limited the rights of unions to bargain fairly just as they are today.

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The article link is <http://www.newlearner.com/courses/hts/cln4u/pdf/labourhistory.pdf>

Just in case, like me, you need a reminder of what the labour movement continually fights for, please read the following portion of the article I would like to highlight:

The growth of trade unions as an institution and force in society has benefited the lives and dignity of workers. But the interests of organized labour are not restricted to just conditions of employment and working conditions. Canadian unions have been in the forefront, and continue to be, in the fight for better health care, education, housing, pensions and human rights. All Canadians have benefited from the efforts of the founders and builders of Canadian labour unions.

Very likely the necessity to include this portion in my article is due to the week I spent in a very positive union setting.

I also want to mention before closing that we (the FSA) have not given up on making sure those of us who like to take fitness classes during our lunch hours will have the ability to continue. It may take us some time to work this out, but it has not been overlooked.



Rhonda Snow

From the

FPSE Status of Women Rep

Next month brings International Women's Day on March 8th. Various community organizations in Abbotsford and Mission have joined forces to offer a free event to celebrate International Women's Day. Events begin at 11 a.m. at Thunderbird Memorial Square (32315 S Fraser Way) and continue from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Reach Gallery (32388 Veterans Way).

The amalgamation of International Women's Day and One Billion Rising is a day to celebrate the inspirational and brave work women around the world are doing to secure women's and girl's rights and create better and equitable societies. It is also a day to reflect on the work that remains and remember the many women whose voices go unheard and who continue to be excluded from realizing their full potential. One Billion Rising will turn the world stage into an arena for events worldwide, asking women and girls to find or organize an event in their community, and stop, gather, dance and celebrate the right of all women and girls to live peacefully and free from violence.

For more details see: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1446476645583857/>

The Federation of Post-Secondary Educators Status of Women committee meets soon to continue our November discussion around plans to create an online library of resources for women's groups. In the works is a three-minute video that we hope to have completed in time for International Women's Day. This video will showcase some of the women's events at FPSE member campuses.

The National Day of Remembrance and Action against Violence against Women was December 6th. I set up an educational display in the foyer of the university with the hopes of making contact with as many students, staff, and faculty as we could. With the help of FSA staff Tanja Rourke and Harman Dhaliwal, we had the opportunity to speak with more than 130 people who stopped by to ask questions about our posters and videos. This was a

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particularly successful event given that we had the opportunity to meet with so many people in the 15 to 24-year-old age group that is at highest risk for experiencing violence. In addition, we were able to engage men by providing information about the BC Lions' Don't Be a Bystander campaign and the White Ribbon Campaign,* which are both effective ways for men to become involved in ending violence.

The February 14th Memorial March for Missing and Murdered Women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside commemorates the murders of local indigenous woman. Unhappy with the lack of attention being paid to the growing number of missing women, many of whom were of Aboriginal descent, unions and activists' groups began to march to bring attention to women who have simply disappeared.

*In a survey conducted by the White Ribbon Campaign group, 97% of men said they believe violence against girls and women is a concern to them; 87% said they believe violence against women affects all women, including those in their lives. See www.whiteribbon.ca



2014/15 Budget Plan presentations

President Mark Evered invites all members of the UFV community to attend one of two presentations on the 2014/15 Consolidated Budget Plan. The budget process and recommendations will be discussed.

The Budget Plan will be going to the April 3 Board meeting for approval.

Monday, March 3

11:00am to 12:00pm

Abbotsford campus, room A225/229

Tuesday, March 4

3:00pm to 4:00pm


CEP campus, room A2428

The sessions will be captured on video for those unable to attend.

FPSE and Student Organization launch campaign to save ESL programs in BC

The Federation of Post-Secondary Educators (FPSE) has joined forces with the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) in BC to pressure the federal government to re-think its plans to cut ESL funding... FPSE and CFS are prepared to work with the provincial government to maintain the support of ESL training and to find ways to ensure that ESL programs currently delivered in public institutions remain accessible and affordable to the thousands of students who need those programs to succeed.

Visit the Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofesl> to learn about upcoming media events and to support the continuation of ESL programming for BC students.

A portrait of a middle-aged woman with shoulder-length grey hair, wearing a blue medical scrub top with a stethoscope around her neck. She is smiling slightly. An orange circle is overlaid on the right side of her face.

“My pension plan means my wife and I can plan for our retirement and not worry about paying the bills. After 40 years of work, that’s what I call fair.”

**together
WE’VE GOT
PENSIONS.**



FSA
Faculty & Staff Association



Canadian Labour Congress
Congrès du travail du Canada

www.canadianlabour.ca



FSA Contacts 2012 - 2013

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What's Next on the FPSE Calendar?

For updates and upcoming meetings at the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators, visit their **new** website at <http://www.fpse.ca>

**Bargaining Coordination
Committee Meeting**
February 28

Presidents' Council, Victoria
March 2 & 3

**Pension Advisory
Committee Meeting**
March 7 & 8

words & vision

Newsletter of the UFV Faculty & Staff Association

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